



CHILE

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Overview

During colonial times, public education was not a priority in Chile. It would, however, become an important objective during the first years of Chile's independence. In 1813 the government created the National Institute (Instituto Nacional) and, in the same year, the first education law, which stipulated there should be at least one school for boys and one for girls in every town in Chile. Implementation of the law was stalled for twenty years, when the Spanish once again took control in Chile.

In 1833, Chile established its own constitution, which mandated that "public education is a priority concern of the state," meaning that education should be provided by the state and in a centralized manner. It was this constitutional mandate that began to shape the "teaching state" (*estado docente*) in Chile, which would solidify during the second half of the nineteenth-century, in 1860, with the Organic law of Primary and Normal Education (*Ley Orgánica de Enseñanza Primaria y Normal*). The law stated that education would be free and government-directed. Another act that would contribute to strengthening the state's role in education was the Organic Law of Secondary Education of 1879, which established that public

secondary education would be free. It also required the creation of free public schools in each province of the country.¹

Years later, in 1920, the Compulsory Primary Education Act was passed, and so “education for children between the ages of 7 to 13, or until completion of the fourth year of elementary schooling,” became obligatory. This act was amended in 1929, increasing the mandatory age to 15 years or until the completion of six years of school.²

Chile’s 1925 Constitution reaffirmed the state’s role in education. This Fundamental Law also instituted one of the guiding principles in Chile: educational freedom. Two years after the consecration of this important principle, the Chilean Ministry of Education was created (hereafter referred to as MINEDUC). The Ministry’s charge has been to establish an integrated educational management structure.³

The 1965 reform eventually modified other reforms. It made primary compulsory education last eight years and decreased secondary education from six to four years. It also divided secondary education into two tracks: “technical-vocational” education and “scientific-humanist “ education.⁴

In 1971, Salvador Allende’s socialist government developed a project called the National Unified School. The project sought to turn primary and secondary school into one continuous general and polytechnic education cycle of 12 years. The project, however, was never fully implemented, as after 1973 the military government implemented a series of reforms with a totally different approach.

The military reforms addressed what the regime believed to be the two main problems in Chilean education at the time—high repetition of grades and dropout rates due to limited capacity of schools and to a highly centralized system that failed to recognize and accommodate a growing demand for education.⁵

In 1979 the government transferred authority for public schools to the municipalities, which became responsible for the provision of resources and personnel. Teachers, therefore, ceased to be public employees.⁶ Municipalities could manage schools by implementing one of two systems: either creating municipally controlled non-profit corporations called “*corporaciones municipales*,” which were private law organizations governed by their own rules, or by establishing Municipal Education Administrative Departments (Direcciones de Administración de Educación Municipal, hereinafter DAEM).⁷

A second modification had to do with the funding of the institutions. Until then, the Ministry of Education in Santiago had a budget for resourcing schools derived from

general tax revenues. The Ministry then distributed funds to the entire school system, specifying the amount each school could spend. Under the new funding system each school was allocated a budget based on the number of students in attendance.⁸ The amount of resources was to be determined on an annual basis and paid monthly. Budgets were weighted to consider grade level and special student needs.⁹

“Along with this change in the way of allocating resources, the market supply of education was completely deregulated, allowing private, nonprofit and for-profit, organizations to collaborate in educational management.”¹⁰ In effect, this meant that any person or body approved to run a school could have access to these allocations as well.¹¹ As a result, the number of private schools financed with public funds increased by 50% between 1980 and 1990.¹²

In this voucher-like system, families chose educational establishments according to perceptions of quality, and were not limited by income. The system was also meant to ensure competition.¹³ Although in some ways well-structured, the system lacked a fundamental element—there was little to ensure that parents had the information necessary to make informed choices about schools. It wasn’t until 1995 that the first results of the System for the Measurement of the Quality of Education (Sistema de Medición de la Calidad de la Educación, hereinafter SIMCE), created in 1988, were made public.¹⁴ That system did provide one indicator of school quality.

The cycle of educational reforms implemented by the military government culminated in the enactment of the Constitutional Organic Law of Education (Ley Orgánica Constitucional de Enseñanza, hereinafter LOCE) published on March 10, 1990.¹⁵ This law described the minimum requirements that had to be fulfilled within the different levels of education and established that it was a duty of the State to ensure that municipalities complied with the requirements. Secondly, it stated that education was a right of all people, and also that it was both a “preferential right” and a duty for parents to educate their children. Lastly, educational freedom (*libertad de enseñanza*) was also consecrated in this new law.¹⁶

In 1990 a left-center coalition was elected to govern the country. Even though it didn’t modify the essential structure of the educational system it had inherited from the military government, it did seek to introduce educational reforms.¹⁷ These reforms can be described in terms of two groups, the first concerned with guiding the educational process, and another with implementing structural reforms.¹⁸

Among those belonging to the first group was the “Nine Hundred Schools Program” (Programa de las Novecientas Escuelas, hereinafter P-900). The idea of the P-900 was to support the nine hundred worst performing and under-resourced schools to improve educational quality by better educating and equipping teachers and school leaders.¹⁹ “Courses of action implemented to improve the educational process and

working conditions included: the implementation of teacher training workshops, the creation of classroom libraries, the provision of educational materials, the strengthening of educational management, and the implementation of training workshops and the provision of special attention to children at higher risk.”²⁰

Other programs regarding educational processes aimed at the Improvement of the Equity and Quality of Education (Programas de Mejoramiento de la Calidad y Equidad de la Educación, hereinafter MECE).

In discussing this group of reforms, it is important to mention that the new government also put forth curricular reforms, which replaced existing programs that had been created in the early 80’s and involved the reorganization and introduction of cross-disciplinary subjects, and the incorporation of skills development plans and contents regarding values.²¹

Among reforms concerned with the structure of education, in 2002 Law 19532 created the “Régimen de Jornada Escolar Completa” or “Full School Day regime,” which sought to lengthen the weekly teaching hours from 30 to 38. Another reform mandated a “shared financing system” (sistema de financiamiento compartido). Until 1993 it was possible for subsidized schools to charge families a school fee, though doing so would cause schools to lose up to 40% of their government subsidies. The new system provided that schools could charge fees, but that doing so would involve a variable decrease in the subsidy, according to the amount of the fee charged.²² This system of shared financing has been widely criticized because it is believed to contribute to segmentation and social segregation within the school system, undermining a push toward systemic equity.²³

To fully understand the Chilean system of education today, it is important to point out that from 1990 to 2003 spending on education steadily increased, ranging from 3.8% to 7.4% of the GDP.²⁴ Moreover, in 2003, a constitutional reform was passed making secondary school compulsory, thus extending mandatory schooling from eight to twelve years.²⁵

Finally, in recent years, the Chilean educational system has not been free of criticism. In 2006 students joined in a massive, well organized protest to express their objection to the high levels of segmentation and social segregation that characterize the system. Within this context, students demanded the right to receive an education of quality under equal conditions. The government decided to respond to these demands by introducing changes that many believe should be interpreted as a new educational reform—an institutional reorganization of the school system that is best compared to the neoliberal reforms of the early ‘80s.²⁶ The proposals elaborated as a result of these protests were embodied in a project that would replace the LOCE: the General Law of Education (Ley General de Educación, hereinafter LGE).

Indeed, the current government has regarded the improvement of education in Chile as one of its fundamental objectives. That is why a series of reforms have been announced, some already materialized, among which are:

- providing scholarships to those students obtaining high scores on the University Selection Test (Prueba de Selección Universitaria, hereinafter PSU)
- setting up 60 schools of excellence to cover all cities
- “modifying curricula by incorporating more effective technologies and teaching methods
- evaluating teachers and providing financial compensation to those who perform well while training those who do not achieve the expected results
- granting greater powers and autonomy to principals which in turn must meet performance targets
- and informing parents to so that they can make better decisions about their children’s education.²⁷

[Editor’s note: a study released in July 2012 found that the rate of improvement in test score performance over the past 14 years in Chile was among the highest in the developed world and more than twice that in the United States; at the associated conference at Harvard’s Kennedy School, Professor Gregory Elacqua attributed this strong progress, in part, to a much improved framework of accountability for the system of school vouchers.²⁸]

The structure of schooling

- i. External structure:
 - a. An OECD report found that there are different administrative categories for schools in Chile:²⁹
 - i. Municipal schools: administered by the 345 municipalities of the country through one of two systems:
 - a. Through Municipal Education Administrative Departments

(hereinafter DAEM): “They respond directly to the mayor and are subject to more inflexible standards regarding staff management.” (OCDE, 2004) Until 2004, 80% of the municipal education was administered by these departments.³⁰

Through municipally controlled non-profit corporations: they are “governed by less stringent rules regarding staff recruitment and use of resources.”³¹

- ii. Subsidized private schools, financed by a public subsidy or grant, based on per-student attendance.³²
 - iii. Private paid schools: completely financed by parents, they receive no subsidies.³³
 - iv. Non-profit corporation schools or delegated administration schools: during the 80’s agreements were signed with private non-profit corporations linked to business organizations, so that they would take over the administration of vocational-technical schools.³⁴ The government finances these through especially assigned funds.³⁵
- b. Funding: School establishments can be categorized according to how they are financed:³⁶

Subsidized: these schools are funded through a state per student grant. This grant is paid monthly to the sponsor on a per-student basis, according to the average attendance of each student during the last 3 months prior to payment. The value of the grant is expressed as a factor of the School Subsidy Unit (Unidad de Subvención Escolar, hereinafter USE), varies depending on whether the establishment has adopted the “full school day” program (JEC), and depends on the level of schooling the student attends to (preschool, primary and scientific-humanistic secondary or technical-vocational secondary).³⁷

According to how subsidized schools are administered, they can be divided into:

- Municipal subsidized schools: Administered by “sponsors,” (sostenedores) who can either be Municipal Education Administrative Departments or municipally controlled non-profit corporations.
- Private subsidized schools: Formerly administered by a

person or a legal entity. Today, according to the LGE they can only be administered by legal entities.³⁸

Shared financing subsidized schools: these schools are funded through a state grant and the economic contribution of parents who have to pay a monthly fee.³⁹ This system works based on a tiered reduction of subsidies, depending on the amount contributed by the families (the maximum amount that can be charged to parents is of 4 USE, if this is exceeded, the establishment shall abandon the subsidized system to become a private paid school).⁴⁰ Sponsors of either primary or secondary schools may voluntarily opt for this mode. Municipal schools however, have limits: those providing primary education cannot, by law, comply with this system. Secondary municipal schools can, but require parents' approval.⁴¹

According to article 9 of law no. 19247 of 1993, private schools providing preschool education from the 2nd level of transition as well as those providing general basic and secondary education may ascribe to this system when complying with certain requirements.

Schools administered by DAEMs or by municipally controlled non-profit corporations can only opt for this system if they provide secondary education and if the majority of parents and guardians of students attending the establishment agree to it.

Delegated Administration schools (Decree Law 3166 of 1980): these are technical-vocational schools, owned by the State, funded through agreements signed by legal entities linked to business and industry (Ministerio de Educación de Chile). Most nonprofit corporations administering these schools are owned by guilds and other trade associations.⁴² Each year the Ministry of Education may allocate resources to these schools, in order to finance their operation.⁴³

- i. Fiscal Schools: Administered directly by the Ministry of Education, funded by the state (There is currently only one school subject to this system called Villa Las Estrellas de la Antártica).
- ii. Paid schools: They are funded entirely through monthly payments made by parents.⁴⁴

c. Staffing:

d. Education professionals are governed by different rules depending on the administration of the establishment at which they work. Thus:

- a. Law 19,070, which most people refer to as “Teachers’ Statute”, governs education professionals working at public schools. This law provides, in its article 2 that “Educational professionals are persons holding the title of professor or educator, awarded by “normal” schools, universities, or Technical-Vocational Institutes. All persons lawfully authorized to exercise the teaching profession and those authorized to perform it according to legal regulations currently in force will also be considered to be Educational professionals.”

ii. Internal Structure:

Formal or regular education is organized into four levels: preschool, primary, secondary and tertiary education, and into different models of delivering education, aimed at addressing specific groups.⁴⁵ Different models of educational delivery consist of “organizational and curricular options within one or more the referred levels (of education) which seek to respond to special learning needs, personal or contextual, in order to ensure an equal right to education.”⁴⁶ Modalities can be divided into:

- a. Special or differential education: aimed at students with special temporary or permanent educational needs, as a result of a deficit or specific learning difficulty.⁴⁷
- b. Adult education: aimed at young people and adults who wish to start or complete their studies. This modality is intended to ensure compliance with compulsory education and to provide education opportunities throughout peoples’ lives.⁴⁸

The legal framework

The Chilean Constitution guarantees all people the right to education. Article 19 No. 10 states that “Parents have the preferential right and duty to educate their children. The state shall provide special protection to the exercise of this right. Moreover, it is an obligation of the state to promote early preschool education and ensure free access

and government funding, although preschool shall not be a prerequisite for primary schooling.

Primary and secondary education are compulsory, the state must finance a free system for that purpose, aimed at ensuring access for all. Secondary education, in accordance with the law, shall be available to students until 21 years of age.

In recent years, the Chilean education system has undergone many changes. Most are the product of an intense debate concerning the deficiencies observed in the school system, such as “high levels of social segmentation and segregation.”⁴⁹

Freedom to establish non-state schools

Historically, the Chilean education system has had a mixed character. “Education has been provided both by public schools and by private entities of philanthropic or religious nature.”⁵⁰

The mixed nature of which we speak is enshrined in Article 4 paragraph 4 of the LGE as follows: “The education system is of mixed nature, including one of ownership and management of the state or its organs, and private one, subsidized or paid, assuring parents and guardians the freedom to choose the educational establishment for their children. “

For its part, Chile’s Constitution provides in its Article 19, number 11 that “Freedom of education includes the right to open, organize and maintain educational establishments” and “An Organic Constitutional law shall establish the minimum requirements to be demanded in each of the levels of primary and secondary education, and will set the objective rules of general application that would allow the State to ensure compliance. Such law will, likewise, set the requirements for official recognition of educational institutions at all levels “.

It follows that freedom of education in Chile has two sides, or faces: one that involves the right of parents to choose the educational establishment for their children and another that includes the right to open, organize, and maintain educational establishments. This is likewise consecrated by Article 8 of the LGE.

Educational establishments must be officially recognized by the state in order to operate.⁵¹ Once officially recognized, these educational institutions must meet the general objectives set out in this law, as well as the national learning standards, which are required to be complied by the entire school system.⁵²

The law imposes certain requirements to be fulfilled so that an educational institution can obtain official recognition. They are briefly summarized as follows:

- a. Having a sponsor (a “holder”). Sponsors are legal entities governed by public law, such as municipalities and other entities created by law, or legal entities governed by private law, whose sole purpose shall be education. The sponsor is responsible for operating the educational establishment.⁵³
- b. Having an educational project or program.⁵⁴
- c. Sticking to the curricular bases developed by the Ministry of Education, while applying a broader program of study.⁵⁵
- d. Having and implementing regulations that meet the national minimum standards for evaluation and promotion of students for each level.⁵⁶
- e. Committing to fulfilling national learning standards, according to the instruments established by law for such purposes.⁵⁷
- f. Having an internal regulation governing the relations between the establishment and the various people who make up the school community and ensuring fair procedures in case that sanctions are contemplated. This regulation shall not contravene the laws and other norms in force.⁵⁸
- g. Having the appropriate and necessary teaching staff and sufficient support staff to enable educators to meet their respective roles, considering the level and modality of education they provide and the number of students who attend their classes.⁵⁹
- h. Giving evidence of having paid a minimum capital.⁶⁰
- i. Proving that the facility in which the establishment operates meets the standards of general application previously established.⁶¹
- j. Having at least the minimum appropriate furniture, equipment, teaching elements and learning materials for the levels and type of education they seek to provide.⁶²

Sponsors are required to comply with these requirements if their institutions are to be officially recognized.

Homeschooling

Article 41 of the LGE, states that “A Supreme Decree issued by the Ministry of Education will regulate the way of validating knowledge developed outside the formal system, either from personal experience or the workplace, leading to levels or degrees, and how studies equivalent to primary or secondary education completed abroad will be validated.”

The above law ensures that homeschooling is permitted in Chile. The validation process for studies achieved outside the formal system is fully regulated by Supreme Decree No 2272 of 2007, and can be carried out through two mechanisms: taking a validation test or undergoing a validation process.⁶³

The validation test requires the submission of certain documents and the presentation of certificates of study that provide proof of completed courses leading to the level requested to be validated. The validation process requires a homeschooler to provisionally enroll in an educational institution designated by the Regional Ministerial Secretariat of Education where he/she is to be evaluated in order to obtain a qualification for determining his /her promotion or level.⁶⁴

School choice not limited by family income

As mentioned previously, Chile has a mixed system where schools are allowed to establish their own educational projects. Freedom of education is enshrined in a way that allows parents to choose the establishment that has the educational project that best suits their needs and beliefs.

Other factors considered by families are often related to “family income, workplaces, residential, educational and religious preferences, among other factors. Families even self-select based on their children’s abilities.”⁶⁵

Unfortunately, income is often an important when choosing an educational institution. This is believed by some to have contributed to segregation within the school system.

Although the amount required to be paid by parents in the public system is near to zero, those establishments operating under a subsidy system may choose to subscribe to shared financing, which involves charging families. This system therefore entails limiting access to certain schools for certain families, according to a family’s ability to pay.⁶⁶

Two factors, however, help compensate for the lack of equity in the current system. First, the LGE provides in Article 12 that “within the admissions processes of subsidized

establishments or the ones receiving regular state funds providing education between the first transition level and sixth year primary school, shall not be considered, in any case, the previous or potential school performance of the applicant for any of these levels. Furthermore, the applicant's family shall not be required to submit socioeconomic background information within these processes “

Secondly, the SEP Law mitigates differences through “increased subsidies targeted to the poorest students.”⁶⁷ This benefit ensures that a sponsor cannot charge a student receiving the SEP subsidy.⁶⁸

Distinctive character

The principle of freedom of education permeates the Chilean educational system. This involves the freedom to open, organize, and maintain educational establishments, which in turn implies the right of educational sponsors to establish and carry out an educational project and to develop plans and programs of their own in accordance with the law.⁶⁹ However, if such sponsors want their educational institutions to be able to certify validly and independently the approval of formal studies, they shall undergo the process of official recognition.⁷⁰

The LGE, in Article 46, outlines the regulations for this procedure, “redefining, specifying and increasing the requirements for the state to grant official recognition.”⁷¹

For their part, sponsors are required to comply with the requirements to maintain official recognition of the educational establishment they represent. They are further required to ensure continuity of educational services during the school year, to render a public account for academic results of their students and, if they are financed by the state, to render a public account for the use of these resources and the financial status of their establishment.⁷²

Requirements set by the General Law of Education are “essential to provide compulsory education and to independently certify these processes, regardless of their ability to obtain public funding to do so. In other words, the requirements apply to what, in the Chilean educational system, are called municipal or publicly owned schools, private subsidized schools, and private paid schools, without exceptions. Those who do not meet these requirements will not be publicly recognized and will therefore not be certified.”⁷³

With regard to curriculum, as we explained above, while the sponsor is entitled to establish and pursue an educational project and to develop plans and programs of its own in accordance with the law, it is also required to comply with specific objectives set in the

curricular bases for preschool, primary and secondary education, and with the general objectives set by the LGE for each level in its Title II.

Curricular bases for preschool, primary, and secondary school are set by the President, by means of a Supreme Decree issued through the Ministry of Education, after the approval of the National Council of Education. These define, by cycles or years respectively, the learning objectives that will allow the achievement of the overall objectives for each of the levels specified in the LGE.⁷⁴

Those educational institutions wishing to develop alternative plans and programs that they consider appropriate to fulfill the objectives defined in the curricular bases and the complementary goals that they independently set, must submit those plans to the regional education authority so that they can be approved by the Ministry of Education. This approval requires the explicit inclusion of the learning objectives found in the curricular bases.⁷⁵

In this manner, while respecting the general learning objectives defined for the entire Chilean education system, each school is given a certain flexibility to emphasize the aspects of formation considered relevant based on its own plans and programs of study. Those establishments that do not have plans or programs, are bound to abide by those developed by the Ministry of Education and approved by the National Council of Education.⁷⁶

Decisions about admitting pupils

The Constitution guarantees all people equality before the law and states that no law or authority may establish arbitrary differences.⁷⁷ The LGE dictates “education is a right of all people and that it is a duty of the state to provide special protection to the exercise of this right. It is also a duty of the state to provide free quality education, based on a public education project, respectful of all religious expression and pluralistic, allowing access to the entire population and generating conditions for remaining into it in accordance with the law.”⁷⁸

The Constitutional provision is also supported by article 11 of the referred law, by stating that “Neither the State nor the educational institutions may arbitrarily discriminate regarding the treatment they should give students and other members of the educational community.”

Having mentioned these laws, it is also important to point out that article 12 of the LGE tacitly allows admissions processes to be carried out by subsidized schools and by those regularly receiving state funds, referring to “admissions processes conducted

by subsidized establishments or schools receiving regular state funds providing education between the first level of transition and the sixth year of basic general education...”.

The aforementioned provision does not make any distinctions regarding control of these schools, which means both municipally controlled schools as well as private subsidized schools can conduct admission processes. This leads to the irrefutable conclusion there must surely exist certain factors that shall not be considered when admitting students, these are:

- Until 6th year of primary education the past or potential academic performance of the applicant shall not be regarded, nor shall the submission of the applicant’s family socioeconomic background be required⁷⁹
- change in the marital status of parents and guardians shall not prevent a pupil from continuing to study in the same establishment.⁸⁰
- Between preschool’s first level of transition and the sixth year of primary general education, students’ academic performance shall not prevent future enrollment.⁸¹
- In subsidized schools, students have the right to repeat a grade at least once in the same primary educational establishment and once in the same secondary educational establishment. Grade repetition shall not lead to expulsion from school.⁸²

The LGE also established criteria seeking to prevent arbitrary discrimination in all establishments, whether private or public, these are:

- Pregnancy and motherhood shall, under no circumstances, constitute an obstacle to enter and remain in any level of an educational establishment, the latter shall provide academic and administrative facilities to enable the fulfillment of both objectives.⁸³
- During the term of the respective academic school year, the cancellation of enrollment, suspension, or expulsion of students for causes associated to non- payment of obligations contracted by parents or to student performance will not be permitted.⁸⁴
- Non-payment of commitments made by a student or his/her parents or guardians shall not constitute a reason for the implementation of any sanctions during the school year nor for the retention of academic

documentation.⁸⁵

Finally LGE article 13, states that:

“Processes of admission of students must be objective and transparent, ensuring respect for the dignity of students and their families in accordance with the guarantees established in the Constitution and the treaties signed and ratified by Chile.

When soliciting applicants, an institution should report:

- a. Number of places offered for each level
- b. General criteria for admission
- c. Deadline for application and date of publication of results
- d. Requirements for applicants, background information, and documentation to be submitted by them
- e. Types of tests that applicants will be subjected to
- f. Payment amount and conditions for participating in the process
- g. The establishment’s educational project”

Decisions about staff

As we have already seen, one of the requirements schools must meet to in order to obtain official recognition is to have the appropriate and necessary teaching staff so that educators are enabled to meet their respective roles, considering the level and modality of education they provide and the number of students who attend their classes.⁸⁶

The term “appropriate teaching staff” refers to requirements educators must meet in order to teach each level and modality:

- For preschool and primary education: “qualified teachers are those educators holding a professional degree corresponding to the educational level they wish to teach and to the specialty they seek to impart when appropriate, or

those who are entitled to exercising the teaching profession according to legal norms in force.”⁸⁷

- For secondary education, “qualified teachers are those educators holding a professional degree corresponding to the education level they wish to teach and to the specialty they seek to impart when appropriate, those who are entitled to exercising the teaching profession according to legal norms in force, or those holding a professional title or degree of at least 8 semesters from an accredited university in an area similar to the specialty imparted by them. The latter will be allowed to teach for a maximum period of three years renewable for another two, continuously or intermittently and at the simple request of the director of the establishment. After five years, if they still want to continue to teach, they must hold the corresponding professional educational degree, or pursue studies leading to such degree or certify teaching competencies according to the stipulations of the establishment’s internal regulations. These regulations shall only establish assessment instruments of disciplinary knowledge and pedagogical practices as the ideal means to accredit teaching skills.”⁸⁸

Different institutions, such as “universities receiving public funds, private universities, and professional institutes, provide initial teacher training in Chile. Their careers are defined according to levels and modalities of education that correspond to our current system: preschool, primary, secondary and differential, including some specialties that may correspond to more than one level.”⁸⁹

Usually university careers tend to be longer, lasting about 10 semesters, while careers offered by technical institutes have a shorter duration of approximately 8 semesters.⁹⁰

As well explained by Manzi (2010), the choice of a teaching career is more common among those students attaining average or low results on admission tests to universities. This demonstrates that there is a lack of appreciation of the teaching profession by students, an issue related to low salaries and other issues. Strengthening of the profession through the implementation of various policies has become a priority in recent years.

The INICIA program, created in 2008, has been identified by some education experts like Manzi (2010) as one of these policies, seeking to transform institutions, curricula and practices involved in initial teacher training.⁹¹ To that end, the program includes three lines of implementation: the application of a diagnostic evaluation of the knowledge acquired by students of education in various teacher training institutions

(universities and institutes) in the country; the definition of disciplinary and educational standards and national curriculum guidelines for the formation of teachers; and the creation of a special fund for financing projects for the strengthening and renewal of teacher training institutions.⁹²

Another improvement policy is the provision of the “teacher vocation scholarship” for those who choose the teaching career. All students and professionals with an educational vocation can apply for it. There are no considerations regarding age, high school year of graduation, secondary education grades, socioeconomic status, or school of origin (municipal, private subsidized or private). On the other hand, having achieved a good score, that is, over 600 points on the University Selection Test (Prueba de Selección Universitaria, hereinafter PSU) is an important requirement for obtaining this grant.

Accountability for school quality

There are two different systems for evaluating education in Chile:

1. The Ministry of Education’s National Evaluation System of Quality of Education (hereinafter SIMCE): Its main purpose is to help improve the quality and equity of education by reporting on student performance in different segments of the national curriculum and relating them to the school and social context in which they learn.⁹³

SIMCE tests measure the learning achievements of students set out in the Curricular Framework (now call by the LGE “Curricular Bases”). These tests are applied nationally, every year, to students who attend a certain educational level.⁹⁴

In addition to tests related to curriculum, the SIMCE also collects information about teachers, students, parents and/or guardians through context questionnaires. This information is used for contextualizing and analyzing the results these tests.⁹⁵

The SIMCE publishes learning outcomes at a national, regional, and communal level. It also publishes the results of each individual establishment in the country.⁹⁶

SIMCE results have diverse uses: They provide parents with information

about their children's school performance thus helping them to make informed decisions. They also allow teachers, among other things, to assess whether the initiatives implemented in schools have a positive effect on the level of students performance. Finally, the results are a tremendously useful tool for the Ministry of Education, as they allow it to identify establishments presenting consistently low scores and therefore in need of external support to improve teaching and learning.⁹⁷

2. The National Performance Assessment System for Subsidized Educational Establishments (hereinafter SNED): This system was created in 1995, by Law 19,410, and began operating in 1996. It belongs to the set of initiatives aimed at strengthening the teaching profession. The main objective of the SNED is to help improve the quality of education provided by the subsidized educational system in the country through recognizing and incentivizing teachers and institutions that perform well. The SNED provides a Performance Excellence Subsidy, which is a monetary bonus divided among teachers in high-performing schools.⁹⁸

In order to measuring a number of factors related to the performance of educational institutions, groups of establishments with similar characteristics (called "homogeneous groups") are formed in each region of the country. Once these groups are structured, a performance assessment based on various indicators or effectiveness is made.⁹⁹

Teaching of values

The LGE in its article 2 includes the definition of education and also prescribes those values that should be included within the learning process:

Education is a lifelong learning process that encompasses the various stages of people's lives and aims to meet their spiritual, ethical, moral, emotional, intellectual, artistic and physical development, through the transmission of values, knowledge and skills. It is based on respect and appreciation for human rights and fundamental freedoms, multicultural diversity and peace, and our national identity, enabling people to lead their lives fully, to live and participate in a responsible, tolerant, united, democratic and active way in a community and to work and contribute to national development.

The foregoing is supported by article 4 of the same law, which states: "without prejudice to its other duties, is the duty of state that the system integrated by educational

institutions owned by it, provides free education of quality, founded on a public educational project, secular, that is, respectful of all religious expression, and pluralistic, allowing access to the entire population and to promote social inclusion and equity.”

The inclusion of these articles in the LGE is due to our legislators’ conviction that the educational process must be aimed towards the integral development of students and not just the achievement of learning standards.¹⁰⁰

Endnotes

¹ Beyer, 2000

² Freeburger & Haugh, 1964

³ Amar, 2007

⁴ Soto R., 2000

⁵ Beyer, 2000

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Medlin, 1997

⁹ González, 1998

¹⁰ Beyer, 2000

¹¹ González, 1998

¹² Cox, 2003, p. 7

¹³ González, 1998

¹⁴ Beyer, 2000

¹⁵ Cox, 2003

¹⁶ Articles 2 and 3, LOCE

¹⁷ Gauri, 1998

¹⁸ Beyer, 2000

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Colegio de Profesores de Chile, 2005, p. 343

²¹ OCDE, 2004

²² González, 1998

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ OCDE, 2004

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Bellei, Contreras, & Valenzuela, 2010

²⁷ Emol, 2011

²⁸ Hanushek, Peterson, and Woessmann.

²⁹ OCDE, 2004

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ González, 1998

³⁵ OCDE, 2004

³⁶ Ministerio de Educación de Chile

³⁷ Aedo & Sapelli, 2001

³⁸ Ministerio de Educación de Chile

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ González, 2003

⁴¹ Aedo & Sapelli, 2001

⁴² González, 2003

⁴³ Article 4, Decree Law 3166

⁴⁴ Ministerio de Educación de Chile

⁴⁵ Article 17, LGE

⁴⁶ Article 22, LGE

⁴⁷ Article 23, LGE

⁴⁸ Article 24, LGE

⁴⁹ Correa & Stahl, 2010, p.7

⁵⁰ Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile, 2010, p. 13

⁵¹ Article 45, LGE

⁵² Article 45, paragraph 4, LGE

⁵³ Article 46, letter a, LGE

⁵⁴ Article 46, letter b, LGE

⁵⁵ Article 46, letter c, LGE

⁵⁶ Article 46, letter d, LGE

⁵⁷ Article 46, letter e, LGE

⁵⁸ Article 46, letter f, LGE

⁵⁹ Article 46, letter g, LGE

⁶⁰ Article 46, letter h, LGE

⁶¹ Article 46, letter i, LGE

⁶² Article 46, letter j, LGE

⁶³ Article 8, Supreme Decree No 2272 of 2007

⁶⁴ Article 9, Article 14 and Article 15, Supreme Decree No 2272 of 2007

⁶⁵ Beyer, 2007

⁶⁶ Mena & Corbalán, 2010

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ Article 10, letter f, LGE

⁷⁰ Article 45, LGE

⁷¹ Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile, 2010

⁷² Article 10, letter f, LGE

⁷³ Peña, 2007

⁷⁴ Article 31, LGE

⁷⁵ Article 31, paragraph 5 and 6, LGE

⁷⁶ Article 31, paragraph 4 and Article 53, letter c, LGE

⁷⁷ Article 19, No.2, Constitución Política de la República de Chile

⁷⁸ Article 4, LGE

⁷⁹ Article 12, LGE

⁸⁰ Article 11, paragraph 2, LGE

⁸¹ Article 11, paragraph 5, LGE

⁸² Article 11, paragraph 6, LGE

⁸³ Article 11, paragraph 1, LGE

⁸⁴ Article 11, paragraph 3, LGE

⁸⁵ Article 11, paragraph 4, LGE

⁸⁶ Article 46, letter g, paragraph 1, LGE

⁸⁷ Article 46, letter g, paragraph 2, LGE

⁸⁸ Article 46, letter g, paragraph 2, LGE

⁸⁹ Ávalos, 2010

⁹⁰ Consejo Superior de Educación en Ávalos, 2010

⁹¹ Ministerio de Educación de Chile

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile, 2010

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